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FOREIGN AND INSULAR

AUSTRALIA.

SYDNEY—Examination of Rats for Plague Infection.

The following information is taken from bulletins issued by the department of public health of New South Wales:

During the month of January, 1911, there were destroyed 5,145 rats, of which number 1,711 were examined for plague infection. No plague-infected rats were found.

The last case of human plague was reported May 29, 1909.

The last plague-infected rat was found April 25, 1910.

CHINA.

AMOY—Smallpox.

The American vice consul reports March 13 the presence of smallpox.

HARBIN—Status of Plague.

Consul Greene reports February 7:

Plague is reported at Harbin and Fuchiatien as follows:

	Jan. 29 to Feb. 4, 1911.	Total since beginning Nov. 8, 1910.
Harbin.....	¹ 189	² 3 1,020
Fuchiatien.....	832	4,234
Total.....	1,021	5,254

¹ Including 9 Europeans.

² Including 341 bodies found by the sanitary brigade.

³ Including 27 Europeans.

These figures show a decrease in the average daily mortality of from 35 to 27 in Harbin and from 147 to 119 in Fuchiatien. On February 5 the total number of deaths reported at Fuchiatien was only 77. There is reason, therefore, to hope that here at least the epidemic is beginning to lose its force, though the decrease in numbers in the part of the population most liable to infection must be taken into consideration.

At the beginning of the week under review a cordon of Chinese soldiers was established around Fuchiatien, a body of 1,000 troops sent from Changchun being used for this purpose. The police were thus left free for duty within the town itself, which was divided into 4 precincts, communication between which was forbidden. In each precinct a sanitary substation was established, each with its corps of

medical inspectors, transportation service, and disinfection brigade. Provisions, fuel, etc., are being delivered to each district by the officials. The policing has been greatly improved, there being rarely any dead or dying to be seen in the streets as formerly.

On January 27 there were 20 physicians at work in Fuchiatien, including the chief of the medical staff and 3 English physicians. Two of the other physicians were trained in Japan, and the remainder in Peking and Tientsin. There were also 28 medical students from Peking, Tientsin, and Mukden.

One important work begun in Fuchiatien during the present week was the burning of the bodies of the plague victims. According to a statement of the chief of the medical staff, 1,100 bodies were burned on January 31, 350 on February 1, and 2,100 on February 3. In the future all bodies found will be disposed of in the same way. It was calculated that there were altogether about 4,800 bodies to be burned. A large number of houses known to be infected have also been burned, including one whole section of the town.

The number of cars available for the detention of contacts from Fuchiatien under observation was increased from 35 to 100, through the courtesy of the Chinese Eastern Railway, so that now about 2,000 people can be held.

In Harbin itself, while the total number of deaths has been on the decline, there has been a distressing mortality during the past two weeks among the members of the medical staff and the men employed in handling the sick and the dead. Of the 9 deaths of Europeans during the past week all but one were of persons connected with the work. One more physician has died in addition to those previously reported.

As regards the preventive value of vaccination against plague the physicians here are disagreed, and the available records are not sufficiently complete, nor do they cover a large enough number of cases to make possible the forming of any definite conclusions. Contrary to the opinion expressed in my report of January 28, however, apparently nothing positive has been proved against the effectiveness of the vaccination in cases where the subject has not been exposed to infection before the period of from 7 to 10 days after the final inoculation, during which time many physicians here hold that the subject is more than ordinarily susceptible to the disease. Out of 17 deaths recorded among the personnel, in 9 cases there had been no inoculation, in 6 only the first, and in only 2 cases had the vaccination been completed, but both of these last were infected before the period of the negative phase had been completed. Of the European staff of 398 persons, only 154 had on February 5 completed their vaccinations.

There is inclosed herewith a translation of an official statement published by the Russian Plague Bureau, describing the work and organization up to January 26, 1911. This will serve to give a general idea of the methods employed.

A report dated February 2, 1911, received from the local Chinese plague bureau, shows that the epidemic has secured a firm foothold all over that part of Kirin Province along the Chinese Eastern Railway. Various measures taken to check the spread of the disease are described. The number of deaths in the whole Pinchow district up to January 28 is stated to be 223, in the Shuanchengpu and Ashiho

districts, respectively, over 100 and 200. In Ninguta and the surrounding district 108 deaths are reported for the period from January 25 to January 29. No official reports have been received from Heilungchiang Province, but merchants and press reports indicate that the mortality in Tsitsihar, Hulan, and in the Suihwafu region has been very heavy.

[Inclosure.]

MEASURES ADOPTED AGAINST PLAGUE IN THE CITY OF HARBIN.

[From the beginning of the epidemic to Jan. 25, 1911.]

To centralize the work of all the organizations for dealing with the plague in Harbin a plague bureau was established by the central sanitary executive commission.

QUARANTINE STATION, ISOLATION AND PLAGUE HOSPITALS.

The quarantine station and isolation and plague hospitals were all established in one place, 4 versts ($\frac{1}{2}$ miles) from Harbin Station, in barracks and heated freight cars. One hundred and eleven freight cars, accommodating approximately 3,000 men, have been fitted up for the accommodation of persons under observation, being placed on tracks specially constructed for the purpose. There are also 6 barracks, capable of accommodating 1,500 men under observation.

Two barracks have been set apart for the isolation and plague hospitals, being divided into 3 wards, and accommodating nearly 100 men. There are 54 beds in the isolation hospital and 43 in the special plague hospital.

The whole establishment is known as the Moscow Plague Station. There are stationed here 3 physicians, 2 medical students, 5 nurses, 13 medical assistants, 1 pharmacist, 90 sanitary attendants, and 30 other employees, or 143 persons in all.

The hospitals are provided with beds, tables, stools, and the necessary linen for the patients and for the medical staff. Quarters have also been fitted up there for the inferior employees, and there is a laboratory for bacteriological examinations, with a room for autopsies.

There is a special disinfecting squad working at this station, which is equipped with all the necessary materials and apparatus. The temperature of all persons under observation is taken daily, and, after 5 days' quarantine, if there have been no cases among them they are released, after being first bathed and their baggage and clothing disinfected. Two cars have been fitted up as steam disinfection chambers in which clothing and effects are disinfected at a temperature of 100° C.

Kitchens have been established at the quarantine station, from which food is supplied to the persons under observation, to patients, subordinate employees, and staff.

A corps of grave diggers has been organized with special carts and tools, to bury the dead, including the bodies brought in by the flying detachment. The plague cemetery is 2 versts ($1\frac{1}{2}$ miles) from the plague station.

FLYING DETACHMENT.

A flying detachment for moving patients and bodies has its headquarters in the center of the city. Its personnel includes a physician, a medical student, 4 medical assistants, 27 sanitary attendants, 9 drivers, and 10 other employees. This detachment is provided with 3 ambulances for moving patients, 4 wagons for transporting dead bodies, and several carts. Besides the carriages hired for the medical staff this detachment has 13 horses and all the necessary equipment for transportation. In connection with the quarters of this detachment there is a laundry where the men's gowns and linen are washed; also baths.

DISINFECTION DETACHMENTS.

Disinfecting detachments have been organized with a personnel of 2 physicians, 3 students, 10 medical assistants, and 49 sanitary attendants. They are equipped with 18 wagons and carts for carrying disinfectants, hot water, pumps, and articles to be disinfected. There are 25 horses used by this detachment. Disinfection of effects is carried out in a car specially fitted up for the purpose. There are also 20 spray pumps of different makes, and a stock of the necessary disinfectants, such as carbolic acid, chloride of lime, corrosive sublimate, green soap, etc. A laundry and baths are connected with this station.

SANITARY DISTRICTS.

The city is divided into 9 sanitary districts, for which there is a personnel of 12 physicians, 4 students, 16 medical assistants, and 23 sanitary attendants and interpreters. The staff of each district makes a daily inspection of residents; suspicious cases and persons who have been in contact with plague cases are removed to the special quarantine and isolation station. The headquarters for all the district sanitary officers are in the same building with the flying detachment, in the center of the city.

SEARCHES.

A special investigation agency, consisting of one physician familiar with the Chinese language and 2 European and 4 Chinese interpreters, has been organized to detect cases of illness among the Chinese population, and to conduct special investigations in the Chinese quarters of the city.

DISMANTLING OF PLAGUE-INFECTED HOUSES.

A number of Chinese houses which could not be properly disinfected, and in which plague foci had been discovered, have been dismantled after disinfection, so that they could not be used for dwellings, this being accomplished by removing the roofs, doors, and windows. The work of destroying houses has been assigned to 3 special detachments, made up of firemen. All the people living in the principal centers of infection in the Pristan were removed to the quarantine station; all the tenements, lodging houses, opium dens, etc., near the principal foci were disinfected, several dwelling houses, which were not fit for anyone to live in were closed, and others are being inspected by a sanitary technical committee to determine what repairs are necessary or whether they should be torn down. All the houses in the city where cases of plague have been discovered are carefully disinfected under the supervision of physicians and students.

LODGING HOUSE.

In order to afford shelter to the poorer part of the Chinese population left homeless after the destruction of insanitary dwellings, a night lodging house has been established to accommodate 300 persons, and warmed freight cars to accommodate 500 more have been prepared. These lodgings are under the direct supervision of medical assistants, under the general direction of a physician. The temperatures of the inmates are regularly taken.

BATHS.

A bathhouse has been prepared in the Pristan for the homeless Chinese.

LAUNDRY.

Chinese laundries have been placed under the supervision of the district physicians, and it is planned to open shortly a special laundry to be under the control of the bureau. Of the 7 laundries in Mochiakou to which Europeans send their washing, 2 have been closed. The linen has been disinfected and regular sanitary supervision over the others has been instituted.

SUPERVISION OF WATER CARRIERS.

Orders have been issued to the chief of police to register all the water carriers within 4 days. Thereafter they will be quartered in groups in lodgings specially engaged for them. They will be provided with badges and will be kept under strict sanitary supervision.

SUPERVISION OF TRADING AND INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS.

Trading and industrial establishments, factories, and shops are obliged by a special order of the plague bureau to keep their workmen and employees under special medical surveillance, in addition to the general supervision maintained by the district physicians. Special attention is paid to the sanitary supervision of public baths, laundries, hotels, bakeries, butchers' shops, and night lodging houses.

BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS.

Bacteriological examinations are performed by 2 physicians in a special laboratory at the central hospital.

INOCULATIONS.

Preventive inoculations are given free to the people of the city every day in the Pristan at the municipal clinic, at the city hall to city employees, in the New Town at the general offices of the railway to railway employees, and at the main military hospital. They are also given at the Old Town.

SANITARY VISITORS.

In each sanitary district (9) a system of sanitary visitations has been organized. The total number of visitors is at present 100.

PROTECTION OF THE PERSONNEL.

To protect the personnel from infection the physicians, medical assistants, and sanitary attendants are provided with canvas or cotton gowns and with gloves and galoshes or else canvas stockings. When going to remove patients or to take up dead bodies, they are required to wear gauze respirators. The physicians, assistants, and sanitary attendants are required to submit to preventive inoculation.

SANITARY CORDON.

In order to prevent infection from Fuchiatien and the neighboring Chinese villages the city has been surrounded by a cordon of police posts 15 versts (10 miles) long. Persons are allowed to pass only at 5 points, where sanitary posts have been established, at which suspicious passers-by are required to have their temperatures taken. To maintain the cordon 100 unmounted and 50 mounted police have been detailed. The medical personnel for the 5 posts where persons are admitted consists of 10 assistants and one student.

PERSONNEL OF THE WHOLE ORGANIZATION.

The whole personnel engaged in the work against the plague at Harbin is as follows:

Physicians 22, medical students 11, medical assistants 54, sanitary attendants 194, nurses 5, pharmacist 1, stewards 3, drivers, cooks, messengers, and other servants 69, total 359, which, together with the members of the plague bureau and clerks and bookkeepers employed by them, makes the total number of persons engaged in the work 375 in all.

NOTE.—To February 4 the staff was increased by 7 physicians, 1 student, 61 sanitary attendants, 7 nurses, and 63 Chinese coolies, making the total, exclusive of the administrative offices, 498.

Plague in Shantung Province.

The following statement of deaths from plague, dated February 13, was received from Consul Fowler at Chefoo:

Places.	Total deaths.	Places.	Total deaths.
Laichowfu.....	220	Taianfu.....	(1)
Hwanghsien.....	100	Tsinanfu.....	
Pingtu.....	50	Tsiningchow.....	
Tengchowtu.....	45	Tsingchowfu.....	
Weihsien.....		Ichowfu.....	(2)
Near Weihsien.....	30	Total.....	458
Changhsia (near Taianfu).....	13		

¹ No authentic reports.

² Not infected.

On February 7 there were reported 18 deaths from plague at Changsia and 188 at Changchew, making a total of 651 deaths in the interior of Shantung Province. The total number reported at Chefoo is 290, which gives a total for the Province of 941.